(b) if so, the number of applications received in this regard and the names of the candidates called for interview;

(c) the criteria for the selection with regard to experience, qualification and seniority in the relevant field;

(d) the names of the successful candidates and whether any panel was prepared; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 16 applications were received in this regard. None of the candidates were called for interview.

(c) The suitability of the candidates was assessed based on experience, qualification, seniority amongst the eligible candidates and their Annual Confidential Reports.

(d) and (c) A merit list consisting of three candidates viz. Km. Shobhna Srivastava, Smt. Sharda Vashisth and Shri C.S. Verma, in that order, was prepared.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR THE 16TH APRIL, 1999

Gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu

*361. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total length of tracks converted into broad guage in Tamil Nadu;

(b) how much distance of tracks is yet to be converted into broad gauge;

(c) by when this project is likely to be completed;

(d) whether it is a fact that the projects are running behind their schedules; and

(e) the action taken for timely completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The total length of track converted into broad gauge in Tamil Nadu till dates is 820 km.

(b) Work is in progress for conversion of 584 km in Tamil Nadu and another 443 km have been included in the budget and will be taken up after the requisite clearances have been obtained. The remaining MG lines have not yet been planned for conversion.

(c) The gauge conversion of Arakkonam-Chengalpet is planned to be completed in 1999-2000. For the other lines no target dated has yet been fixed.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The projects are being progressed as per priority approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs and availability of resources.

Blood Donation by Professional Donors

*362. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that professional blood donors are still donating blood in various Government hospitals in the capital, inspite of orders of the Supreme Court for ban on such donors;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether, on many occasions, Government hospitals in the capital have given blood to the needy patients, which was expired one; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof and the action contemplated by Government in this regard?

*The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Friday May, 16th April, 1999 was cancelled. Answeres to Questions put down in the lists for the day were laid on the Table of the House on Monday, the 19th April, 1999.